

Addressing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Problem

It is common knowledge that it is erroneous to pretend to present a comprehensive discussion of all problems of any society's development process, if at all. This is due to the fact that socioeconomic development represents such a complex process which requires the utilization of the expertise of analysts and social engineers from numerous disparate disciplines and ideological inclinations. Hence, the best attempt could be to highlight a few aspects of any society's problem and prospects of development at any one time.

With particular reference to Nigeria, one of the legacies of the long period of military rule is the loss of a national development planning culture. A concomitant effect is the lack of a reliable system for collecting national planning and development data. This historical deficit negatively affects government efforts to generate reliable and consistent baselines for assessing progress towards the MDGs

The idea of reform is now a global concept that no state can afford to escape from its ubiquities. It is now a popular concept because democracy and citizenship are two of the most significant issues that demand that a state must be responsible for the welfare of their citizens if their claims to be democratic were to be genuine. Also, at the heart of the democratic framework is the big assumption that democracy has the capacity to get things done in such a way that would make citizens live good lives.

It is understandable that at the heart of the reform is the administrative system the state has set up to deliver the public goods and services to the citizens. These administrative systems are then constantly challenged by global ideas about reforms and innovation and best practices to make them live up to expectations about what is to be done to deliver these goods and services effectively in order to improve citizens' experience. Cognizant of this and in recognition of the fact that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Agenda constitutes a useful framework for development that makes real and measurable difference in the lives of people, the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs was set up in 1995 to implement the MDGs. Globally identified as a pro-poor agenda of action with eight goals conceived to address extreme poverty and hunger, illiteracy, women empowerment and gender equality, child and maternal health, environmental sustainability, HIV, malaria and other diseases, as well as the building of global partnership for development, the MDGs align with Nigeria's development aspirations as listed out in the Vision 20:2020 document and lately in the Transformation Agenda of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathon, GCFR.

Mandate

The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the Millennium Development Goals is vested with the responsibility of developing a coherent, logical and progressive strategy towards the achievement of the MDGs. This is in addition to designing appropriate mechanisms to tag and track Debt Relief Gains (DRGs) funded expenditure, whilst consistently enhancing the drive to attain the MDGs by 2015 even amidst daunting challenges.

Strategies

In its effort to place states and local governments at the centre of development efforts, including making the investments and reforms necessary to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Transformation Agenda and to address difficult challenges that impede development, the OSSAP-MDGs uses a number of strategies/initiatives to implement a unique scale-up of local investments in the MDGs. These include but are not limited to the Conditional Grant Scheme, the Special Projects Initiative (SPI), the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Programme and several other interventions through MDGs/DRGs implementing MDAs.

Reform Actions

Below are the specific reform actions being implemented under the Conditional Grants Scheme (CGS) Unit:

Development of Sustainability Policy Frameworks on MDGs Interventions in Water and Sanitation Sectors

With concerted efforts channelled towards the construction of water and sanitation facilities numbering 22,779 in tens of thousands of communities, it became imperative to set up a sustainability policy framework aimed at ensuring the continued sustenance of water and sanitation projects. Not limited to this sector, this strategy has been replicated in the other MDGs/CGS interventions.

Gender Inclusion

This is a critical consideration in all project evaluation processes with a view to achieving Goal 3.

Introduction of the Monitoring, Supervision and Data Collection Framework

The introduction of the Independent, Monitoring, Supervision and Data Collection framework has, in no little way, enhanced on-the-spot assessment of MDGs Conditional Grants Scheme funded projects and programmes. This provides clear feedback, highlights challenges, identifies lagging states and local government areas, and is the basis for assessing performance and eligibility for further grants.

Review of the CGS implementation framework

Successful as the CGS framework portends to appear at the initial stage, stakeholders found the need to further initiate improvements with a view to clarifying roles and responsibilities of the implementing agencies, focal persons of MDGs offices nationwide as well as ensure projects identification, selection, planning, implementation, management, effective monitoring and reporting for the purpose of achieving CGS objectives.

Consolidated e-based payment of the CCT Scheme

The OSSAP-MDGs has helped in the eradication of poverty in Nigeria through the Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme that has reached 103,067 Nigerian households since 2011. The households receive N5,000 per month for 12 months. They also receive entrepreneurial training during the programme and N100,000 at the end of the programme to aid in enterprise start-up as an exit strategy.

Village Health Workers (VHW) Scheme

The MDGs VHW scheme is a unique programme established by the OSSAP-MDGs office to generate the required impact of better community/local health outcomes by way of mobilizing individuals, households and communities to utilize healthcare facilities provided in communities. This in addition to conducting routine household visits to community

members, recently discharged patients, those referred to higher health facilities, and pregnant women on pre- and post-natal clinic visits. Here, a total of 3,740 village health workers have been recruited, trained and deployed to 261 local government areas nationwide.

Micro Credit Scheme

The main concept of the scheme involves provision of grants to **three selected** agriculture-based co-operative societies in each of the participating **148 LGAs** for group agricultural activities mainly for investment in enterprises along the agricultural value chain operated through micro-credit finance process managed by the cooperative members themselves. The agricultural grant scheme seeks to provide the necessary financial empowerment for the rural populace through the systematic release of funds as grants in sums as high as ₦500,000.00 to each cooperative from the CGS track to LGAs purse.

Nigeria MDGs Information System (NMIS)

The Nigeria MDGs Information System (NMIS) provides a comprehensive map of health, education, water and sanitation facilities throughout the country. The system was developed using the results of a nationwide Baseline Facility Inventory and Needs Assessment in all 774 local government areas. The NMIS covers the location of facilities, their capacity and gaps in capacity, and guides investment of the Debt Relief Gains in pro-poor activities.

Scale up of investments to Local Government Track

CGS interventions broadly range from the CGS to Local Governments and CGS to States respectively. Using the human development index by UNDP as the criteria, 113 local government areas were identified for intervention. This number increased to 148 and 210 in the subsequent years of 2012 and 2013 respectively. The CGS scale-up is being extended to 250 LGAs in 2014.

Public Finance Management (PFM): The overall objective of this review is to undertake a financial study of the 148 Local Governments benefiting in the CGS to Local Governments under the 2012 Federal appropriation. Specifically the review helped to ascertain exact allocation of resources to the 148 Local Governments from the Federation account for 2010, 2011 and 2012, in addition to determining whether the Federation allocation to Local Governments is adequate to fund the needs assessment investment requirements in the Local Governments. Also, the PFM assesses the 2010, 2011 and 2012 financial years expenditures of Local Governments on MDGs related activities and investment particularly in Education and Health sectors.

Main Achievements

Sector-wide Deliverables:

Broadly categorized into two – the MDGs Conditional Grants Scheme and MDGs Constituency Projects, the breakdown of deliverables is as it appears below:

Sector	Deliverable	OSSAP-MDGs	Constituency Projects	Total
Water & Sanitation	Water facilities (Boreholes, Small Town Water Schemes)	12,342	4,684	17,026

Sector	Deliverable	OSSAP-MDGs	Constituency Projects	Total
	Construction of Minor Irrigation Systems	-	128	128
	VIP Latrines in Schools and Hospitals	2,734	538	
Health	Health Facilities (Constructed, Renovated, Equipped)	5,305	120	5,425
	Health Workers Trained	68,430	-	68,430
	Engagement and Training for new Village Health Workers	4,710	-	4,710
	Referral Vehicles (Ambulances)	520	-	520
	Health Workers Quarters Constructed	356	-	356
	Health Advocacy/Sensitization/Mobilization	90	-	90
	Procurement/Distribution of Drugs/Consumables/Health equipment	1,534	-	1,534
Education	Classroom Blocks (Built/Renovated)	3,136	-	3,136
	School exercise books, textbooks and instructional materials	2,807,208	-	2,807,208
	School Desks, Benches, Chairs for Pupils and Teachers	81,603	-	81,603
	Teachers' Quarters Constructed	92	-	92
	Schools fenced	16	-	16
	First Aid Boxes	463	-	463
	Engagement and Training for new Education Extension Workers	1,130	-	1,130
	Classroom Blocks + VIP Toilets + Hand-pump Borehole	-	485	485

Sector	Deliverable	OSSAP-MDGs	Constituency Projects	Total
	Classroom Blocks + VIP Toilets	-	144	144
	Construction of Skills Acquisition Centre A	-	115	115
	Construction of Skills Acquisition Centre B	-	60	60
	Construction/Furnishing of Computer Centres	-	25	25
	Construction/Furnishing Community Library	-	14	14
Power	Construction of 500KVA Transformer Substation	-	716	716
	Construction of 300KVA Transformer Substation	-	1,000	1,000
	Construction of Solar-Powered Borehole	-	1,625	1,625
	Construction of Solar-Powered Street Lights	-	8,560	8,560
Economic & Social	Households receiving Conditional Cash Transfer	103,067	-	103,067
	Agriculture Co-operative Funding	1,074	-	1,074
	Farm Diversification	47	-	47
	Food Security	20	-	20
	Construction of Community Halls	-	216	216
	Supply of Tricycles	-	1,981	1,981
	Supply of Grinding Machines	-	7,823	7,823
	Supply of Tractors	-	14	14
	Supply of Sewing Machines	-	14,934	14,934

Sector	Deliverable	OSSAP-MDGs	Constituency Projects	Total
				4
	Supply of Wheelchairs	-	5,746	5,746
	Construction of Rural Access Roads	-	284	284
	Supply of Block Moulding Machines	-	488	488

Self-sufficiency in Food Supply

Today, Nigeria has reached an unprecedented 60 per cent sufficiency in rice production, a feat, which the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) recently described as capable of raising world rice output to a record high in the next 12 next months. Ultimately, this has culminated in meeting the nutritional needs of the country by half.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS dropped from 5.8 % in 2001 to under 4.2 % in 2008 and has since reduced beyond this threshold. The current prevalence in the general population is 3.4. The proportion of population accessing antiretroviral drugs increased from 16.7 % in 2007 to 34.4 % in 2010.

Improvement in Maternal Health

Maternal mortality fell from 800 deaths per 100,000 births in 2003 to 545 deaths per 100,000 births in 2008, and subsequently to 350 deaths per 100,000 births in 2012. The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel increased from 36 % in 2003 to 39 % in 2008. The use of contraceptives increased from 8 % in 2003 to 10 % in 2008.

Special Preform Actions being implemented under the Special Project Unit (SPU)

A significant reform that was introduced by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs towards effective implementation of projects at the grassroots is the Special Project initiative (SPI). Owing to the efficiency of the intervention, the National Assembly members have found it convenient to channel their constituency projects funds through the MDGs office. Apart from periodic reports from the National Management Consultant, Zonal Inspectors as well as the State Project Consultants, independent inspection teams from the Special Projects Unit of OSSAP-MDGs visit project sites regularly. Reports from these feedback help to improve project administration. The Special Projects Unit has undertaken projects in cross-cutting sectors and as itemised in the table above, projects include construction of classroom blocks, supply of classroom furniture, as well as projects in the health, agriculture and water sectors, among others.

Health Sector:

- i. Innovations by OSSAP-MDGs have helped the country record immense successes in the Health goals 4, 5 & 6 which have been described as challenging.
- ii. In order to facilitate the attainment of the MDGs, the OSSAP-MDGs in collaboration with the NHIS is implementing the NHIS-MDG/MCH Intervention Project. The project which is DRG funded is aimed at facilitating the achievement of MDGs 4 & 5, by addressing the critical problem of financial barrier preventing access to healthcare services for pregnant women and under-five children.

Currently a total of 1,793,893 pregnant women and children under five are accessing care.

- iii. Innovations such as the Midwives Service Scheme and the Community Health Extension Workers' Programme have contributed to the modest successes recorded by bridging the human resource gap that exists.
- iv. Midwives Service Scheme (MSS) – one of the most successful projects in solving the problem of human resource shortage in the country - has contributed greatly to skilled birth attendance in our health facilities. So far the MSS consists of 250 clusters with 1,000 PHCs (1 general hospital as a referral centre surrounded by 4 PHCs) and 40 general hospitals with 160 PHCs are connected with ICT.
- v. OSSAP-MDGs is the major sponsor of Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) in the country and have invested more than N8 billion for this activity in the 2012 budget. In 2012, eight rounds of polio campaigns were conducted and over 248,007,078 OPV immunisations were done; similarly, four rounds of maternal and neonatal tetanus campaign were conducted and about 15,313,604 women of child bearing age (WCBA) were vaccinated.
- vi. Currently, there is improved access to routine immunization through support for procurement and distribution of routine immunization vaccines and cold chain rehabilitation. In 2012, about 8,252,000 doses of BCG, 6, 566, 4000 doses of DPT, 14,000,010 doses of TT and 10,500,000 doses of HBV were procured and administered.
- vii. A cumulative total of 2,691,437 LLITNs and 44,679,846 doses of antimalarial (ACTs/SPs) were distributed for use across the states. It is worthy to note that the DRGs-MDGs investment in malaria control is contributory to the reported decline in incidences of maternal and child mortality in Nigeria as related to MDGs 4 and 5.
- viii. OSSAP-MDGs has partnered with the Vesico-Vagina Fistula (VVF) Office in the FMOH and the national VVF Centres in Kastina and Abakaliki and supported the training of 41 VVF Surgeons and 44 Nurses with 480 VVFs repaired in the country. The training was conducted in collaboration with UNFPA's and USAID's VVF programme.

Education Sector

OSSAP-MDGs has made available over N113.75bn of debt relief to the Federal Ministry of Education from 2006 to date to implement various programs and projects bordering on girl child education programme, National Programme on Almajiri, Support to the National Teachers Institute, Support to UBEC for the Federal Teachers Scheme (FTS):

- i. The objective of the Gender/Girls Education project (GEP) also known as the girl child education program is to improve enrolment, access and completion rate in schools and eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary schools nationwide. Consequently with the implementation of this initiative the country has achieved parity between boys and girls in both secondary and primary education three years ahead of the 2015 deadline.
- ii. In a bid to mainstream basic education into the Islamic Education curriculum and provide infrastructure in selected schools, the National Programme on Almajiri was conceived and is currently being implemented in 15 states across the country. These states include: Borno, Sokoto, Zamfara, Niger, Katsina, Bauchi, Jigawa, Yobe, Kaduna, Adamawa, Lagos, Oyo, Osun and Edo States.
- iii. The National Teachers' Institute has the mandate to ensure teacher quality and capacity is sustained in the education system.
- iv. Trained and re-trained an average of 120,000 teachers annually from 2006 to date.
- v. The Scheme seeks to continuously give teachers the requisite skills they need to have a competitive advantage and be able to impart same knowledge to their students.

- vi. The Federal Teachers' Scheme's objective is to alleviate the dearth and distribution of qualified teachers in the basic education sub-sector. The Scheme is a two (2) year program for unemployed qualified graduates who serve as a period of internship preparatory to formal absorption of the participants into the core teaching profession.
- vii. The Scheme recruits about 40,000 teachers and 5,000 science teachers every two years who are then posted to states according to need.
- viii. The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs pays the salaries of these teachers for two years until they are absorbed by host states. Once absorbed by host states, the teachers' remuneration is taken over by the states.
- ix. Support for curriculum development through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.
- x. Nomadic education programmes to improve access, equity and integration into formal education through the National Commission for Nomadic Education.

Other Interventions

In line with the tenets of the Transformation Agenda, the OSSAP-MDGs has introduced new initiatives to stimulate progress of the MDGs in the run up to the 2015 MDGs deadline, and to ensure that Nigeria's development aspirations are fed into the report of the UN High Level Panel on Post-2015 Development Planning. These include the United Nations MDGs Acceleration Framework for Goal 5 and convening of the National Stakeholders' consultation on the Post-2015 Development Framework, respectively.

1. MDGs Acceleration Framework for Goal 5

- a. The MDGs Acceleration Framework (MAF) Technical Working Group was introduced by OSSAP-MDGs in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Health, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development-supported State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (DfID/SPARC). Targeting MDG 5, MAF is a UN created tool designed to intervene in a single or number of MDGs areas to alleviate bottlenecks and create efficiencies in areas of current policy and service execution.
- b. The development of the MAF Action Plan has now been successfully completed. This Action Plan draws on workshops held with representation from all stakeholders at all different levels of society. The Action Plan prioritizes a number of interventions, such as Family Planning and the strengthening of referral systems. It then identifies bottlenecks to the execution process and suggests acceleration solutions and their viability in terms of short-term impact. Finally, the Action Plan costs these solutions over a five-year period and assigns their responsibility to the respective stakeholders.

2. Thematic and Sub-National Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Framework

- a. Although the Millennium Development Goals framework has been lauded for focusing development attention on key aspects such as health and education indicators, as well as on poverty and hunger, they have been criticized for the lack of inclusion in their formulation. As such, efforts are now focused on ensuring that this is not the case during the Post-2015 Development Agenda consideration. OSSAP-MDGs took the lead in 2012 to embark on participatory and inclusive Post-2015 National and Thematic Consultations to make opportunity available for all Nigerians to voice their development aspirations.

- b. The consultative process was conducted over three separate events. In April 2012, an expert group meeting held to consider the performance of the MDGs framework in order to articulate priorities for the Post-MDGs Agenda.
- c. Consequently, the First National Consultation, being the second event designed to aggregate Nigeria's development aspirations, held in May 2012. The follow-up consultation was the sub-national and thematic event where stakeholders were drawn across the country, from all levels of society involved with the formulation and execution of development policy. This consultation took place in February 2013. The outcome document being fed into the report of the High Level Panel on Post-2015 Planning.

3. Partnership with CSOs for Accountability in Programme Delivery

- i. OSSAP MDGs recognises the role of citizens as independent voices and actors in the partnership towards the achievement of the MDGs. Towards this end, it has engaged civil society organisations in the selection, planning and implementation of pro-poor programmes in collaboration with the sub-national governments. This has further underscored the commitment of the office to the philosophy of bottom-up approach in the execution of projects.
- ii. The involvement of the CSOs in the implementation process of Nigeria's MDGs programme also gives them the opportunity to play oversight roles while also promoting improved governance. Nigerians through this mechanism are beginning to get value for money on project execution and service delivery thereby guaranteeing good governance anchored on citizens' participation and efficient service delivery in Nigeria.
- iii. Apart from direct budgetary allocations being made for citizens' monitoring of MDGs implementation, OSSAP-MDGs also support civil society interventions through its partnership with the United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC).

4. Global Recognition for Nigeria MDGs Efforts

Some of the initiatives which has helped the country achieve significant milestones, like the Midwives' Service Scheme have gained global recognition. The Midwives' Service Scheme funded by OSSAP-MDGs and implemented by the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency won the Commonwealth award on Innovations in Government Services and Programmes in India recently.

Key Challenges

Some challenges that militate against progress of the MDGs include:

- i. Slow implementation of projects at sub-national levels
- ii. Low capacity of funds utilization at sub-national levels
- iii. General inadequate budgetary provision that has been identified as one of the major constraints.
- iv. The issue of security is another menace to achieving the MDGs. For example, the Boko Haram debacle and incessant attacks on women and children by insurgents

has constituted a temporary security challenge in some parts of Northern Nigeria.

This has adversely affected the pace of development.

- v. Other notable problems include cultural beliefs that limit health seeking practices, a lack of qualified staff and weak health-systems management across all the three tiers of government.

Not minding the scale of progress achieved so far, there is still some room for improvement, especially in the rural areas where almost all the indicators are lagging. But for the rural areas, the country can be said to have met with reasonable proportion of the MDGs.

Assessment of Reform Initiative

S/N	Assessment Criteria	Result of Assessment
1	Have the reforms improved the quality and quantity of public services?	Yes. The reforms have improved both the quality and quantity of public service as evident from the Nigeria MDGS Information System reports and other reports.
2	Do more people now have services to services including disadvantaged groups such as women, young persons and people with disabilities?	Yes. The number of beneficiaries in interventions such as the Village Health Workers Scheme and Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme have strong gender considerations which includes children and people with disabilities.
3	Have the reforms reduced the cost of governance?	Yes, programmes such as PFM, which has introduced transparency and accountability in the implementation processes, as well as the Monitoring, Supervision and Data Collection framework have drastically brought down the cost of governance.
4	Have the reforms made service more affordable for citizens?	The reforms have made healthcare more affordable, particularly for the rural poor. The Conditional Cash Transfer scheme also means that more poor people are able to

S/N	Assessment Criteria	Result of Assessment
		access services.
5	Have the reforms reduced corruption?	The gradual tightening of the criteria for accessing MDG funds, including the introduction of performance bonds and bank guarantees have reduced the corruption associated with contracting capital projects.
6	Have the reforms reduced unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape?	There is a clear straightforward set of criteria for accessing the Conditional Grants Scheme funds, which is followed. MDG projects tend to focus on delivery, rather than red tape.
7	Are the reforms likely to lead to improved development outcomes?	Yes. Achievement of the MDGs will represent better development outcomes for the country.
8	Are things improving, staying the same or getting worse?	Things have drastically improved compared to 1999.
9	Where things are improving, will those improvements endure?	The improvement are likely to endure as there are sustainability frameworks built into the interventions that have brought about the changes
10	Where things are not improving, what should be done?	Not applicable

Proposed Next Steps

- Advocacy to states for continued counterpart funding and advocacy on appropriate proven, evidence-based strategies for achieving the MDGs
- Institutionalizing the sustainability of the Monitoring, Supervision and Data Collection (MSD) framework
- Strengthening and expanding the MSD framework

- Build on the successes of OSSAP-MDGs since establishment. In particular, there is the need to continue the innovative partnership with the private sector and CSOs to provide independent and objective assessment of MDGs projects across the country. The outcome of such collaboration will contribute greatly to public sector management in Nigeria.
- Regarding implementation of projects, there is the need for continuous improvement in project execution especially in terms of speed and quality.
- The MDGs Office will complete the formulation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda that has as its central objective the eradication of poverty and the completion of the unfinished business of the MDGs whilst integrating the economic, environmental and social dimensions of development.